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For the Suppression of Marplots.

The last Presidential election was fought on the issue of the gold standard, sustained by a powerful sentiment in favor of protection; but the cause of Honest-money against Repudiation is still undetermined. Difficult as the situation is, a new Mugwumpish party, mainly bankers, seek to make it far worse by the intrusion of a more or less private issue entitled "currency reform," which, if it could be forced to the front of the honest-money campaign, would be absolutely certain to give victory to the Bryanites.

A gold standard party proposing to abolish the greenback system at the expense to the Government of $450,000,000, giving to the banks the monopoly of issuing currency, would have as much chance of success as the cause of National Prohibition. The incendiary passions which up to now have raged impotently against the gold standard, because blindly and without the solidifying help of reason, would find in this bank-currency campaign a simple and logical argument for success against which opposition would be powerless.

The sooner business men and laboring men, Republicans and sound-money politicians of all names, suppress the cranks on currency reform and centre the public mind on the still supreme danger of repudiation and other perils of the Chicago platform, the stronger will be the probability that the country will come through the troubles surrounding it unshaken in its credit, undishonored, and ready for the prosperity to which its fortunate position in the world entitles it.

Electrical Progress in the Last Decade.

An article which has not yet received as much attention as it deserves is the review of electrical advance in the past ten years, contributed to the *Forum* by Mr. ELIHU THOMSON, the well-known inventor. Few people realize the extent and range of the applications of electricity to useful purposes which have been made since 1887.

It is pointed out, for instance, by Mr. THOMSON that, at a convention of street railway men held in the year named, the discussion of the expediency of substituting electric traction for horse power was criticised as a waste of time. A convention of the same association in the present year took for granted the universal applicability of electricity to street car propulsion. The prospect now is that, in the course of a few years, the cruelties of horse traction on city railways will exist only in remembrance. Electric traction has given greater speed and better cars, which, moreover, are lighted and heated electrically, the result being an amount of cleanliness and comfort not otherwise obtainable. Electricity seems also destined, at no distant day, to revolutionize passenger traffic on the trunk lines connecting large centres of population.

The facility with which electric service may be superposed on roads originally intended for steam traction has been demonstrated by a conspicuous railway organization. It has been shown that single cars may be propelled at high speed with comparative safety. Even sixty miles an hour has been exceeded. It has further been proved by the construction of several huge electric locomotives for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad that such machinery can haul the heaviest train loads, and more than equal in power locomotives worked by steam. Mr. THOMSON has no doubt that the latter will, eventually, be supplanted by electric motors driving the axles of the cars, as in street railway service. Cheap fuel can be used to generate the power in the electric stations, and water power, where it is available within thirty or forty miles, may be transmitted to the railway line. In a word, the foundations of the railway practice of twenty years hence are being laid to-day.

If we look back ten years we find that, although telephone exchange systems were then already in existence, there were virtually no long-distance extensions. To render the latter practicable the lines have to be made of heavy copper wire, the wire, of course, becoming thicker in proportion to the distance to be covered. It follows that the cost of the copper required becomes very heavy for great distances, over a million pounds of copper being needed for a single circuit from Boston to Chicago.

Prior to 1887, only the largest cities possessed any electric lighting service; the alternating current, which is now so large a factor in electrical enterprises, had scarcely begun to be used. At present, even the smaller towns have their electrical stations, their arc lamps for street lighting, and the smaller incandescents for general use. The incandescent lamps employed in the United States are numbered by millions; and there are several hundred thousand arc lamps besides. There are now in operation nearly 3,000 electric-light supply stations, which, together with isolated electric plants, represent a capital of about $500,000,000.

Stress is naturally laid by Mr. THOMSON on the remarkable application of electricity at Niagara. Here is brought home to us the industrial importance of cheap and unfailing power developed from water in its fall. The power of huge water wheels is delivered to massive dynamos for giving out in turn electric energy. Upon the water power thus transmitted depend the electric light and electric railways of the city of Niagara, as well as a number of remarkable industrial establishments founded in that place. Here, too, the feasibility of the long-distance transmission of power is exemplified by a high-pressure line extending to Buffalo and delivering the electric energy to an electric station there. The Niagara plant has grown into existence within the last five years, as a consequence of the advances in electrical science made within the decade just closed. There are other examples of water-power transmission, some of them far exceeding in distance that between Niagara and Buffalo, and some in which the amount of power conveyed, as well as the pressure of the current used upon the line, is much greater than is yet exhibited at Niagara.

Notable, also, are the applications of the electric current to heating and to metallurgy. By electric welding machines are now made carriage hardware, axles, wheel tires, parts of bicycles, and tools, metal bands for pails, tubs, and barrels, and innumerable other articles. Electric methods have been found adaptable to the annealing of armor for war vessels. Formerly, it was almost impossible to drill or cut holes in the plates of Harveyized armor, but, by the application of electric machinery, it has been found practicable to obtain extreme localization in the heating of metal through the delivery of electrical energy and its conversion into heat at the desired point without impairing the quality of the rest of the plate. Mr. THOMSON reminds us that, before the advent of the electric welding process, iron and platinum were regarded as the only weldable metals. Now all metals are capable of being welded under electric treatment.

Electric heating is used in many other ways. There are electric cooking utensils, electric soldering tools and similar devices, while many street cars are provided with electric heat in winter.

In metallurgy the value of electricity has received of late a new demonstration at Niagara, where the metal aluminium which, not many years ago cost $2 an ounce, is now produced and sold at a price which makes it, bulk for bulk, cheaper than brass. In this case, of course, the electric current's power of electrolyzing or breaking up strong chemical unions is employed. Works for the production of metallic sodium and other metals similarly depend upon the decomposition effected by the electric current. Enormous amounts of crude copper are annually refined by electrolysis, with the result that a nearly pure metal is obtained, where formerly impurities lessened the value of the copper. Not only is this the case, but, in some instances, amounts of the precious metals sufficient to pay the cost of the process have been separated in the refining.

Passing from the applications of electricity to industrial purposes, Mr. THOMSON reviews the advances made in electrical science considered as a department of physics. Among other discoveries, he refers to the demonstration made by HERZ and others that signals may be transmitted to distant points without wires simply by using electric waves of some millions of vibrations per second; these invisible waves being recognized by suitable receivers. Whether, however, the wireless telegraph will supersede surface telegraph lines and submarine cables is pronounced questionable. We note, finally, that the discovery of the X-rays belongs, properly, to electrical science, seeing that the rays are the result of electrical action in certain vacuum bulbs. On the whole, the data set forth by Mr. THOMSON fully justify his conclusion that the application of electricity to the needs of mankind will be deemed hereafter the crowning glory of the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The Dinner Method of Regenerating Democracy.

We have a good deal of respect for the acute perceptions and straightforward intellectual processes of Mr. JEFFERSON M. LEVY. He is a well-schooled disciple of the great statesman whose name he bears, and as to the subject of honest dollars and the honorable maintenance of the nation's faith and credit his intimate convictions, if we are not mistaken, leave nothing to be desired.

At Mr. GEORGE E. HARDING's dinner party to Mr. RICHARD CROKER the other night at the Democratic Club Mr. LEVY spoke of the club as "the future national home of a united and triumphant party." He also expressed the hope that the dinner in question was to be "the first of many that would result in a more thorough understanding among all Democrats in all parts of the country."

As a promoter of political harmony and a unifying force operating upon diverse opinions and divergent interests, the dinner table must always be a powerful adjuvant so long as the human œsophagus remains what it is. Col. BILL BROWN knows its value. The late Victoria Hotel witnessed some of its most notable triumphs. But the political dinner party cannot do all the work; and the most ably conceived and executed repast will run in vain from clams to coffee in the presence of the absolutely irreconcilable.

We have ventured, therefore, to inquire directly of Mr. JEFFERSON M. LEVY upon what platform of principles the Democratic Club of New York expects to unite the Democracy of the nation. Mr. LEVY's reply is printed in another column. It will be read with interest by people of all sorts, but it is not of a character to resolve the last doubt concerning the success of the multi-prandial project of regeneration.

Mr. LEVY says, with truth, that a political party can have but one platform at a time. The present platform of Democracy is the Chicago platform. Mr. LEVY objects to the Chicago platform for several reasons, not the least of which is its declaration for the free and unlimited coinage of silver. Nevertheless, there the Chicago platform stands, and there it must stand until the next National Democratic Convention in 1900 as the supreme expression of party principle. So he admits that the Democratic Club, as a promoter of harmony by dinners or otherwise, must for the present certainly get "the Democrats of the city, State, and nation" together on the Chicago platform, if it gets them together at all.

But this is not harmony; it is absolute surrender on the part of those former Democrats of New York and the East, who, like Mr. LEVY, detest and personally reject the principles enunciated in the Chicago platform. There is no sophistry of definition or phrase by which they can stand as a Democratic club upon the Chicago platform unless they accept, individually and severally, the declaration of the platform as their personal creed in politics. They cannot accept it without believing in it. They can no more accept it for a limited period of two years and six months, without believing in it, then they can accept it for all time without believing in it. Therefore, when the sincere Bryanite Democrats of the West, the advocates of the free and unlimited coinage of silver at sixteen to one independent of the action of any other nation, the supporters of the various un-Jeffersonian and previously un-Democratic heresies which Mr. LEVY describes and despises, are invited by Mr. LEVY and his associates to come and dine on the Chicago platform for the sake of harmony, the invitation proceeding from Mr. LEVY and his associates is either surrender or humbug.

If it is humbug, we have no comments to make. Mr. LEVY and his friends are capable of being sufficiently ashamed of themselves under the circumstances without any assistance from us.

If it is surrender, that is to say, if Mr. LEVY and his friends, the gold Democrats, have really made up their minds that the free and unlimited coinage of silver and the rest of the Chicago doctrine are to be submitted to if necessary, there will be mighty little trouble about securing perfect harmony in the Democratic organization. No dinners will be needed. The money that it is proposed to expend upon mollusks and artichokes and carbonic acid gas from Rheims and Epernay may well be saved for the circulation of Bryanite literature in the campaigns to come. The Democratic Club of New York will become a mission branch of the Chicago establishment, not a centre for the propagandism of sounder financial and political doctrines.

We observe, however, that the logic of the situation is not perfectly clear in Mr. JEFFERSON M. LEVY's usually perceptive mind. He talks precisely as if it were possible for himself and gentlemen like him, first to accept as defensible political truth that which they now regard as indefensible political heresy, and then, having invited all the honest heretics everywhere to come and stand, or, rather, to sit and dine along with them upon the common ground of that heresy, to procure in the course of years a revocation of the Chicago platform by means of good cooking and intellectual persuasion.

The ethical distortion involved in this programme we cannot undertake to exhibit without using unpleasant language. One practical consideration, however, may appeal to Mr. LEVY and the sound money men in the Democratic Club.

A campaign for the election of a Governor of New York will begin next summer simultaneously with a campaign for the election of a new House of Representatives at Washington. The election in November of this year is inferior in State and national importance only to that which will occur in 1900. However many dinners Mr. LEVY and his friends may give meanwhile, they cannot hope to reverse the Chicago platform until the fight of 1898 has been fought and decided. That campaign must be conducted on the Democratic side under the Bryanite flag of Chicago. If the issue could be avoided in the State canvass it cannot possibly be escaped in the Congress elections.

What will be the position of Mr. LEVY and his associates in the coming campaign while they are standing on the Chicago platform? Will it be the position of honest men or of fraudulent pretenders?

The Lake Bennett Affair.

Until the boundary line between southeastern Alaska and British Columbia is clearly defined, at least in its more important and settled portions, such incidents as the one that occurred at the head of Lake Bennett may be expected from time to time. It will be fortunate if all end as quickly and with results no more serious.

The ground in question is on or near the route from Dyea to the Yukon gold fields, and naturally is of consequence now. The Victoria version of the affair is that our flag was hoisted there, and then, upon a protest from the Canadian authorities, hauled down, an apology being offered.

The boundary from Mount St. Elias north to the Arctic is the 141st meridian, and on this line American and British surveys have been made to such an extent, and with such marks at important points, that there has been remarkably little conflict of jurisdiction in the mining regions. In due time visible marks can be raised wherever necessary along the meridian line. But below St. Elias the treaty boundary line runs along the summit of the coast range of mountains, or at most a distance of ten marine leagues from the windings of the coast, until it reaches Portland Channel, whence it follows that channel to the southernmost point of Prince of Wales Island.

In the absence of the mountain range assumed in the treaty, the alternative of a line parallel to the coast and thirty marine miles distant therefrom must be taken. But such a line has not been surveyed, nor has any agreement been reached by our Government and the British for visibly marking it. What the Lake Bennett affair, therefore, suggests is the importance of making soon the necessary surveys and setting up the proper marks at all important points. It is especially important that this should be done on the passes and trails leading up to the Yukon gold region, so that we may firmly hold, without encroaching and yet without yielding, the treaty strip which gives us full control of the coast.

The Protest of the Postage Stamp Collectors.

It is a matter for regret that the protest of American philatelists against the impending calamity of Trans-Mississippi Exposition postage stamps could not have been based on purely æsthetic and artistic considerations. The philatecal protest, so far as its purpose is understood, is moved by economic reasons rather than by those which imply a want of art in the preparation of memorial stamps. That is to say, the 500,000 stamp collectors who carry on their cheerful and industrious pursuit in the United States readily may be supposed to regard with some degree of disfavor a proposition to increase the already considerable volume of marketable stamps by the addition of five varieties of United States stamps ranging in their face value from one cent to one dollar. These collectors, whether amateur or professional, might well regard with weariness such an addition to collectable objects, without an acquisition of which no collector's cabinet can be complete.

The implied reason for the protest of the philatelists is the loss of dignity involved in the issuance of a lot of postage stamps to celebrate an event of not transcendent importance, as the holding of an industrial exposition in Omaha, let us say. The philatelists very pungently remark that this petty business might well be left to small States like Canada and Newfoundland, whose Governments "have stooped to such a prostitution of the legitimate purposes of a Post Office Department." We fully sympathize with the exacerbated philatelists in this presentation of their case, although it is tolerably certain that their opposition to the scheme of stamps for the celebration of the Trans-Mississippi Exposition is due to reasons other than those here adduced.

Of course, the anniversary that gave occasion to the issuing of the Columbian series of stamps in 1893 was one of surpassing importance; and, in this view of the case, our people regarded with good-natured toleration the anomalous character of the designs. It is difficult, if not impossible, to reduce to the dimensions of a postage stamp the gigantic proportions of "The Landing of Columbus" without also reducing the idea thereof to something akin to nothingness. A proper design for a postage stamp is one which has the value of a unit—as a head, a numeral, or single device easily recognizable and readily identified. They who recall without any thrill of pride the microscopic picture gallery of the Columbian series of stamps may anticipate with a feeling of apprehension a similar series of Trans-Mississippi Exposition stamps, iridescent as to colors and pictorial as to effects in trans-Mississippi scenery.

However illuminative of trans-Mississippi progress a view of an Omaha stockyard by moonlight might be, however picturesque a mining scene in the Rocky Mountains or a prairie fire "in little," as postage stamp designs, we submit that these things, which are imminent, would not and could not elevate the American standard of art or illustrate anything whatever but the show which is to celebrate the trans-Mississippi regions.

The American philatelists are right. It is beneath the dignity of the United States Government to issue postage stamps to commemorate the establishment of an industrial exposition whose very existence is a matter of only passing interest.

The Decline of the Religious Papers.

The annexation of Hawaii is opposed, for various reasons, by the *Christian Advocate*, the Methodist organ in New York. It is unnecessary to recount the reasons, none of them being original, but all of them being hackneyed material borrowed from the enemies of the project in the secular newspaper press. On generally similar grounds every annexation scheme in our history has been opposed. If such narrow teachings had prevailed we should not now have the mouth of the Mississippi and foreign territory would lie between us and the Pacific coast.

We refer to the article in the Methodist paper not because it has any importance in itself, but because it affords an illustration of the tone of the political discussion on which so large a part of the religious papers are now engaging. It is the Mugwump spirit, and this in the face of the principles upon which rests our system of party government, with its necessary consequence of party consolidation and organization. It is an attempt to frustrate the formation and enforcement of a party policy representative of the common agreement of a great body of citizens upon certain large issues, and the subordination to it of individual opinions and whims touching matters less vital. Other objectors would destroy the possibility of such consolidation by requiring that in large and in little the party should express their varying views and crotchets. They are ready, for instance, to throw over a party, with its whole body of principle, if they do not happen to like the men concerned in the routine management of its mere machinery.

The religious papers to which we have referred inculcated this disintegrating doctrine during the late campaign. They proceeded on the assumption that the great question of the age related to the propriety of the leadership of Mr. PLATT and the personal merits of Mr. LOW. It was with them solely a matter of men; of principles not at all; and it was very childish.

Is not the decline in the circulation and influence of the religious papers which has been going on during the period since they were attacked with the moral and mental paralysis of Mugwumpery, a logical and practical consequence of the rebellion of healthy minds against such destructive doctrines? The members of churches, especially those likely to take religious papers, are people of decided convictions, and as such they are partisans in politics no less than in religion. They are neither political nor religious agnostics. They are accustomed to organization in their churches, and they understand its necessity in political parties also.

At any rate, it is a fact that the once great religious papers have been steadily falling off in prosperity of recent years, and their simultaneous decline in moral stamina and intellectual force has been not less marked. They are usually nothing more than a feeble reflection of the feebler Mugwump secular papers.

The Judge and the Demons.

There was a pile of oratory in Minneapolis the other day, and a distinguished young traveller from Mexico contributed several cords of it. It would not be right, however, to call him the orator of the day. He was neither perfervid nor fervid. He struggled hopelessly and dryly, in his usual way, with "bimetallism" and the "rising dollar." Another speaker, Judge WILLIS, hurled words in that frenetic manner which turned the Chicago convention into Bedlam. The financial and economic views of Mr. BRYAN are tolerably well known. In Judge WILLIS he has found a worthy successor in the plutocrat-palsying style. Raising both arms and all his voice as far toward heaven as he could get them, Judge WILLIS declaimed that the Republican party "has linked its fortunes with the schemes of organized greed and a manifold monopoly of special privileges. It laughs with those baleful demons, it laughs with mockery and scorn at the miseries of the people. The followers of ALEXANDER HAMILTON, JOHN SHERMAN, and MARCUS A. HANNA have in these latter days polluted the sacred temple of liberty. In that august sanctuary they have erected a statue of gold in honor of that modern BAAL, plutocracy."

BAAL is old but good, and baleful demons are excellent good. The followers of the demons come to the temple every day, except Sundays, "chanting the praises of the gold standard and boasting of the victims which it has slain." By this time the Judge has warmed to his work and is ready to do a strong piece of chanting himself:

"'The times are out of joint.' The miasm of sordid despotism fills the air once redolent with the balmy odors of freedom. Humanity mourns. The cry goes forth, 'How long, O Lord, how long!' Anguish has usurped the throne of mirth, poverty stalks side by side with progress, values shrink, bankruptcies multiply, and desolation abides at the hearthstone of him who earns his bread by manual toil."

This sounds as though it was left over from 1896; but to gentlemen who earn their bread by vocal toil and who are fellow stalkers with poverty and throne-room attendants of anguish, time is nothing. They assume that all time is out of joint, and they propose to have it set; and the miasm of sordid despotism will never interfere with their vocal circulation, mourning and crying for the setting to be begun.

The fracture will soon be repaired if Judge WILLIS is right. The baleful demons will have notice to quit and BAAL will be thrown down:

"Many signs appear daily betokening the renaissance of liberty and the overthrow of plutocracy. To throw down the golden idol, to purge the temple of its votaries, to end monopolistic rule and restore the government of the plain people, to return to the constitutional system of the fathers, to establish justice, to promote the general welfare—these are, I am confident, to be the achievements of the immediate future. In the day of that new birth of liberty, when pæans of rejoicing have succeeded present lamentations, the mandate formerly given by the Roman people of old to their consuls, 'Let not the republic suffer harm,' will be accepted from the American people and will be executed with fidelity and honor by the hero of the bimetallic cause, the champion of liberty, the advocate of popular rights, the gifted, gallant, and irreproachable WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN."

Hurrah and Hooray! But the gifted, gallant, and irreproachable WILLIS is the boy for our money. As a temple purger and demon driver he can give the Hon. BILLEE BRYAN cards, spades, big and little cassino, and three aces.

The Middle-of-the-Road Diversion.

The middle-of-the-road Populists from twenty States who were lately in session at St. Louis, for the purpose of overturning the authority of Senator MARION BUTLER and rejecting fusion, represent the Populists who threw overboard the Democratic candidate for Vice-President in 1896 and cast 250,000 votes for BRYAN and WATSON. Since that election they have kept up a separate organization in many States, where their chief strength is indicated by their poll of nearly 80,000 votes in Texas, 46,000 in Kansas, 26,000 in Ohio, 24,000 in Alabama, 21,000 in California, and 15,000 in Massachusetts. They have retained, too, a considerable following in Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee.

These Southern middle-of-the-road Populist radicals boast that theirs is "a white man's party," thereby modifying the position of Democrats in the Gulf States toward the colored voters. In Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas there has been polled at recent elections a considerable Democratic vote among colored citizens, rather more than making up for the Populist defection.

The present voting force of the radical Populists is uncertain, but it is possible that it is strong enough to have an important effect on the Congressional elections of this year. The present House of Representatives, chosen in 1896, has its largest Democratic membership in the South and Southwest, where the middle-of-the-road Populists are most numerous. Should they persist in the threat made at their recent convention in St. Louis to wrest control of "the Populist party" from the hands of Senator BUTLER and his associate manipulators by running out-and-out clear-the-road Populist Congress candidates in Western and Southern districts, they may introduce into the contest a new element of political uncertainty.

From Sunset, in the State of the Lone Star, there bursts forth a note that jars harshly upon the tunes of populism. "What is it to be," asks the *Sunset Signal*, "a big cotton acreage again, planted with the earnest prayer that our neighbor's crop may be ruined?"

Do we detect the germ of the trust in this tentative plaint? Is there a suggestion in it of conference among cotton-land owners, of a harmonising of their interests and of coöperation in the great industry of cotton growing? We are constrained to think there is. The unmoved and irreconcilable anti-monopolists of Texas should arise and ravage the fields in which this trust germ has found a lodgment.

Mr. AUGUSTIN WALSH, the surviving member of the firm of contractors which took the work of rebuilding the now famous dry dock in the Brooklyn Navy Yard after the failure of JOHN GILLIES, concludes his recent letter of defence to the Secretary of the Navy as follows:

"May I be permitted to suggest that the folly of building a wooden dry dock, rather than a stone one, of so enormous a size in ground of the shifty nature that exists in the Brooklyn Navy Yard has been repeatedly demonstrated. I have been very much surprised that the faults of this dock, whatsoever they may be, should be visited upon my head by the Navy Department at this late date rather than ascribing them to the nature of the structure or the method of the attempted repairs."

Most people will conclude that Mr. WALSH has common sense on his side.

Our esteemed contemporary, the *Richmond Times*, while not averse to the recent enlargement of the staff of the Governor of Virginia, puts forward the theory that the title of Colonel should be conferred, "not by common consent, but by popular election." The theory is engaging, but unsound. The jealousies, the hatreds, and perhaps the deeds of violence which would be caused by the popular election of Colonels in a community where every man is entitled, by the beauty and the chivalry of his appearance, and by his knowledge of war and poker, to be called Colonel, would be dire. No; every Virginian of full age should be *ex officio* Colonel, and the Colonels on the staff should be styled Generalissimos.

So Mr. RICHARD LE GALLIENNE, the man with the Arthurian romantic name, is coming to this country to lecture, read, and write. Have his friends examined carefully the provisions of the Contract Labor law? Surely it will not be pretended that he is an artist.

The Mississippi River is frozen with horror and all the pines of Pearl county sob in fear. The Hon. SHEBANGO SHIVERS of Pearl county has introduced or thrown into the Mississippi House of Representatives a resolution "indorsing" a gentleman of the dangerous name of RAPIER for "his resistance to the high-handed usurpation and seizure of the Mobile Post Office by the Federal authorities." Can such things be and overcome us like a summer shower without our special knowledge? Apparently RAPIER has drawn himself out of the Union, and the Hon. SHEBANGO SHIVERS, inspiring everywhere his own surname, is prepared to follow. The dogs of war howl for their licenses. The Federal authorities must beware.

The Virginia Senate has passed a bill to prevent and punish deception in the sale of imitation butter. Bills of this sort are nearly as common as buttercups and butterfingers, and yet the imitation butter keeps on being sold. Still the wicked wretches utter dreadfully deceptive butter. Why not put butter in the Constitution? Everybody knows that a constitutional amendment is an infallible remedy. When the law doesn't work, try a little Constitution. At the same time, imitation butter is peculiarly wicked, and the safe thing to do is to make it punishable with death, imprisonment, and fine. Perhaps the eater of it should be punished, too. Legislators should go to the root of the matter, even if they have to cut down the tree.

It is said in St. Paul that the Hon. IGNATIUS DONNELLY, the Sage of Nininger, still delving in the Baconian mine, promises rich new treasures. In his next book he will prove, with his customary weight of proof, that BACON wrote "Don Quixote," besides all the English classics except Mr. DONNELLY. Is the Sage of Nininger aware that the original papers of CID HAMET BENENGELI have been recently discovered in a castle in La Mancha, and that they show, with the absolute clearness of a cryptogrammatical demonstration, that the so-called BACON was DON QUIXOTE? The chronological difficulties will be explained sufficiently in the forthcoming volume (No. 28) of the "Proceedings and Famous Deeds of the Academy of Windmills, and Nine Worthies of Toboso." Mr. DONNELLY is going to be surprised.

It is satisfactory to see that the Chicago *Tribune* quotes the view held by President REACH of Philadelphia on how to restore discipline to the ball field, with the remark that the latter expert evidently "realizes the importance of suppressing rowdyism on the field." Mr. REACH favors the common sense plan of forbidding players to question decisions given by the umpire.

"NICENESS" IN WOMEN.

The Interesting Discussion Called Forth by the Story of "Madame Butterfly."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I should like to say "My Dear Mr. Sterner," because this letter is addressed to him. To be sure there are things in this world which are not nice. I mentioned one of them very particularly in my letter, and I see that I so aptly caught her likeness that another woman commends me for it. I also mentioned that she was generally of a strong admixture of foreign blood, an alien to our nature.

My dear Mr. Sterner, do you think you quite understand us? Of course you do in a degree. Thank you kindly for your compliment to the "enormously keen and comprehensive faculties of the American woman." She has them, as has been noticed many times. She looks over the world, and when she finds anything in art or literature which is true and great, she accepts it and rejoices; nonsense to the contrary. The point I attempted to make was this: That the naval officer's wife was untrue to nature; absolutely; a mere distortion, abnormal. What I asked was this: Do men, of the class of the very clever author of "Madame Butterfly" and the editor of a great magazine, expect the presentation of her as normal to pass without comment? Would men, like a woman who could gayly, light-heartedly, and happily adopt the child of her husband's mistress? Do men want to foster such an abnormal nature in women? There is no way so easy as to continually present it in literature as normal.

The travelled American or the foreigner certainly has liberty to dislike our "niceness" if he wants to. Facts prove that he generally respects it. But so long as that niceness is a fact, my dear Mr. Sterner, it should be presented in literature like any other truth. You see, we are on exactly the same side, only you don't know it. We both want the truth. We know as well as you do that there is nothing so moral as truth. Truth is morality. Every great artist and every great writer realizes it, and makes us realize it. It can never do any harm to present the most *un*-nice (since we began with that word) truth if it is done with great art, because it is the mission of art to interpret—to so present the truth that the message shall thrill the dullest. The author of "Madame Butterfly" has come very near to high art in filling us with indignant pity for the poor little Japanese. There we feel his truth: but his American bride is impossible.

Our American women are nice. They like to be nice. American men want to marry nice women. Those are the women they are taught to love and respect, into whose nice hands they want to give their homes, for American men are fastidious enough to want nice homes.

At least, that has been the American woman's theory about her countrymen. What I am asking, I say again, is only this: Would men like a woman who could do what the naval officer's wife tried to do? Was she a nice woman from their point of view? I should like to ask if Mr. Sterner would like her?

AN AMERICAN WOMAN.

NEW YORK, Jan. 14.

The German Art Theory Denounced.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* May that niceness in the American woman against which your German correspondent, Mr. Sterner, inveighs never grow less, but serve as a power against all Sterners as long as her flag shall typify all that is best in the morals upon which it was founded!

The only trouble with our American women is that they are too amiable, too easy. While all pure-minded women protest privately against the filth served to them on the stage at present, they allow themselves to be taken to see these things by men whose moral sensibilities have become so blunted by a continuous course of such art that they do not distinguish the good from the bad.

Women do not yet realize their power. It was not for nothing that the Greeks made Minerva the goddess of Wisdom. To them is intrusted the preservation of morals and of ethics; hence if they were to turn their faces persistently against such plays, very soon the shrewd managers would cease to offer them.

Man is a social animal, he does not like "to flock" all by himself, but wants his pleasures shared by his finer self, woman.

We go to the drama for amusement and recreation, and this is possible without the suggestions of the brothel, which have crept into the theatres, and to which the legs of the "Black Crook" were as virgin snow, morally.

It is heart-sickening for Mr. Sterner to call the blush which is caused by such plays as are at present staged in New York "a conventional, false modesty, and the remains of a narrow Puritanism, limiting hopelessly all efforts in the arts." Arts! Save the mark! To such as Sterner may be applied Tennyson's epigram, slightly perverted:

> The filthiest of all paintings painted well
> Is mightier than the purest painted ill!
> Yes, mightier than the purest painted well
> So prone are we toward the broad way to hell!

NEW YORK, Jan. 14. M. H.

A Bachelor Girl's Protest and Approval.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Permit a woman to declare her approval of the sentiments expressed by "Obadiah Oldboy" in to-day's SUN, and to say that she rejoices in the knowledge that the type of man which he so faithfully represents is not afraid to come forth and "shout his approbation to the 'American Woman'" who writes to THE SUN on the subject of "Wives and Husbands."

Like "Obadiah Oldboy" I, too, "boil with indignation" when I attempt to read some of the literature of the day, and I note with growing horror the character of some of the plays which are presented in our theatres and seem to meet with the approval of large audiences. The encouragement which the reading and the theatre-going public gives to material of this kind is, I fear, responsible for the apparently ever-increasing lack of simplicity of thought and of manner which our mothers taught us to believe in so implicitly.

Let THE SUN continue its good work and thereby earn the gratitude of its readers who are still sufficiently old-fashioned to protest against the advanced views of such writers as the "American Woman" refers to in her article.

NEW YORK, Jan. 14. A BACHELOR GIRL.

An American Girl's Standard.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Perhaps it is due to such stories as "Madame Butterfly" that the American women are considered as heartless flirts who, by means of soft glances and sentimental expressions, lead men on to love them, only to throw them over in the end and barter themselves off in marriage to the highest bidder, be the point of advantage the size of his bank account or his title.

It is time some dissenting voice was raised to crush this belief that is rapidly becoming extant about American women. No true woman, be she American or not, would act as the Lieutenant's wife is supposed to have acted with Mme. Butterfly. Even assuming that the wife loved him, sympathy, which is woman's chief virtue, would have kindled her pity for the plight of the unfortunate "superfluous" woman whose ruin had been brought about by the man whom she had married and respected, and her very sympathy would have kept her from treating the object of her husband's viciousness with the flippancy portrayed in Mme. Butterfly. As to her wifely duties compelling her to take the child and bring it up, the probabilities are that upon learning of her husband's perfidy, not only toward herself but also against the other woman, all wifely duties to such a man would cease *in toto*.

If she married him for his wealth and position (and the story does not give this impression), the love and respect which a young wife generally feels toward her husband being absent, there would be no idealization of character to shatter, and in that case the knowledge of her husband's dishonor would not disturb her very much, neither would the responsibility of her wifely duties weigh upon her so heavily that she would trouble herself with the child.

The portrayal of the Lieutenant's wife as a true, noble woman and wife is a travesty upon the purity and high-spiritedness of the American woman. Thank God! they exist only in fiction, like "Madame Butterfly," for such women by their low moral standards would place a premium upon the immorality of men.

NEW YORK, Jan. 14. AN AMERICAN GIRL.

A Scotch Woman's View.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Did "Obadiah Oldboy" (dear old boy) read "Madame Butterfly"? Surely not, or he would have found it in his heart to see only the pathos of the situation, the writer's delicate handling of the lighter parts only serving to intensify this pathos. In this story it is the little Japanese "doll" who is pleading for her rights just as hard as she knows how in her unenlightened way, and, unlike the modern play, does it not point out what all good women should have—does it not awaken intolerance for the B. F. Pinkertons and the Mrs. B. F. Pinkertons, too; but is it not well that there are such as these for each other since there has to be either of them?

An American woman's idea of right and wrong is above reproach, but has she not confined morality to a rather limited corner of the globe, and has she not shut her eyes to facts—the facts proclaimed daily in the newspapers?

Why censure a writer who did not hold the man and woman up for admiration or respect, but pointed out the cruelty of one man and the more than thoughtlessness of one woman, and may be—yes, surely, since we all have hearts—pointed out the right way to more than one man and more than one woman?

NEW YORK, Jan. 14. A SCOTCH WOMAN.

An Instance in Illustration.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* If "An American Woman" lived in our neighborhood she would have a few more touches to add to her dutiful-for-the-children's-sake wife. Here is a woman who says she is of American parentage, but in her appearance is of alien blood. Her husband is away from home much of the time, but as he is a man of affairs, nobody thought of that until his wife began talking about it. She lives in a perpetual excuse for living with her husband and tolerating what she says is a fact, that he devotes his time to another woman. But her plea always is the fact that she lives in luxury and the other woman works for her living. That seems to compensate her for all things. She says that it is an absolute proof that her husband respects her as a "good woman," quite unconscious that she is writing her husband down as a scoundrel on both sides of the sheet. She tells her slightest acquaintances that she exacts compensations. She is one of those who are full of good works and duties, and, as "Another" suggests, she grows stout! As for "An American Woman's" knowledge of the spirit of the real American woman, that delicacy which makes her holy and precious, which makes her give all, and in giving demand all, it is exactly right. A man is never untrue—or it is so seldom that he is an abnormal brute—to a wife like that. I have one! AN AMERICAN MAN.

NEW YORK.

A CARD FROM MR. REDMOND.

The Question of the Irish Political Programme.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I have read with great interest the editorial in THE SUN inviting me to state publicly the facts of the political situation at this moment in Ireland, and nothing would give me greater pleasure than to explain how the prospects of home rule and of the various political questions stand, but the conditions under which I have come to America preclude the possibility of my doing so. There is a great movement on foot to celebrate the centenary of the Revolution of 1798. For this purpose all Irishmen who call themselves Nationalists—Parnellite and anti-Parnellite—are uniting. I came here to stimulate that movement, and if I utilized my position here to make capital for my own particular party I would be injuring the '98 movement. I prefer to remain silent for the present in the hope and belief that in the near future parties in Ireland will come together upon independent and self-respecting principles. JOHN E. REDMOND.

A Dealer Considers the Installment Plan.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I have been for ten years a dealer on the installment plan, and have been compelled to bring numerous actions for "conversion." Let me give Mr. Speranza my experience with one nationality of "ignorant foreigners," whom I now steer clear of. Of nineteen accounts ten were paid voluntarily; seven clients were summoned to court, and the other two I cannot locate. In no case was an action brought until the full amount sued for was six months and more overdue.

Is that persecution? Though employing different marshals, I have yet to learn of a single case of irregularity on their part. I have invariably heard from defendants before trial day, in person, by mail or through an attorney. If there be any illegal proceedings the marshals' bondsmen are liable for damages therefor. Should a judgment be obtained by default the Justice holds an "inquest," in which he swears the plaintiff, who must prove his case. From what Mr. Speranza says one would infer that the marshals, clerks of court, and even the Justices are either negligent or worse. I have always made due allowance for persons who could not pay, on account of sickness, loss of employment, &c., and there are any number of others in my line who do likewise.

The installment dealer is more sinned against than sinning by one hundred fold. The idea of amending the law so that no person should be imprisoned for a debt of less than $25 is absurd. It shows how "farsighted" "reformers" are.

I have been informed that Justice Roesch has prepared a bill doing away with body executions in installment sales, which will be introduced in the Senate and Assembly by Timothy Sullivan and Julius Harburger respectively. Would it not be wiser for these Tammany gentlemen to be consistent and leave "reform" alone? MERCHANT.

NEW YORK, Jan. 14.

A Bicycle Strip on Twenty-third Street.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Now that Brooklyn and New York have become parts of a greater city, it would be a good thing to lay down a "cycle strip" along Twenty-third street from the east at Broadway ferry across town as far as Lexington avenue. THE SUN has always helped things along. On account of the work of laying the new cable system the cobblestones have been laid temporarily in a strip just the right width for that asphalt strip about which I speak; so now is the time to do the work. C. M. SHIPMAN.

108 KENT STREET, Brooklyn.

The Sun as Phrenologist.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* THE SUN is certainly a daily college course. When I see a man with THE SUN in his company, I know that his head contains lots of high-grade gray matter.

EDWARD BRANCH LYMAN.

GREENFIELD, Mass., Jan. 14.

Notes on the Democratic Platform.

From the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

"I suggest," remarks Chairman Jones, "as a basis of union the Chicago platform, with the 'redeemable in coin' clause left out."

From the St. Louis Republic.

VINCENNES, Ind., Jan. 11.—The Democratic delegation of the Second Congressional district to-day unequivocally indorsed the Chicago platform, advocated William J. Bryan for President in 1900, and declared unanimously for the free and unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1.

Interested in Dead Congressmen.

From the Washington Post.

Some funny requests reach Congressmen, but Representative Lacey of Iowa thinks that a letter which he received from a constituent yesterday takes the cake.

"Please send me," said the writer, "all the obituaries about Congressmen that are published. I do so like to read about dead Congressmen."

SUNBEAMS.

—One Western railroad, at least, refuses to permit stories of the lives of the James and Dalton outlaws to be sold on its lines.

—Some Southern Baptist clergymen have attempted to drive from their churches members who take up the teachings of "Christian Science."

—It is said that a Kentucky surgeon replaced with a wooden leg the broken leg of a steer that was caught under a falling tree at Bowling Green.

—Farm thieves have been operating in parts of Kentucky and farmers have suffered the loss of wagon loads of grain, pumpkins, and shocked corn.

—According to report a Great Bend, Ind., woman, who, on being divorced, married the man who had been her father-in-law, made herself on this second trial a model wife.

—A fish in a bottle was captured by a Maryland oysterman and it seemed to be content with its quarters. Apparently it had entered the bottle under favorable circumstances and found itself unable to wriggle out.

—There is a fine horse at Glasgow Junction, Ky., which was left with a citizen near the railroad station last April by a stranger who was in a great hurry to catch a train and said that he was coming back from Bowling Green on the next returning train. He has not been heard of since.

—The experience of Wichita, where the Masons, who a few years ago bought the First Baptist Church at foreclosure sale, recently purchased the Y. M. C. A. building under similar conditions, gave point to the words of a Topeka clergyman, who said that the lodge-room was superseding the church in Kansas.

—Budding genius in Portland, Or., has devised a utilitarian plan to make the new aluminum musical instruments convertible into kitchen utensils. By making the keys and strings detachable he proposes to use the mandolin for a stewpan, the guitar for a ham boiler or fish frier, and to cook flapjacks on the banjo. It will readily be seen that a piccolo could serve the uses of a poker without any detaching, and the conversion of a saxaphone into a soup ladle would have advantages too manifest for comment.

—In the complaint in a suit for $10,000 damages for personal injuries in the pursuit of his work for the Armour Packing Company at Kansas City, Kan., one Andy Dupont, who is a pugilist of local note as well as an Armour employee, stated his case in rhyme, and asserted that he would "suffer his lifelong by reason of defendant's wrong." The defendant made answer also in rhyme, setting forth as follows:

> "Each claim of plaintiff we resist
> Because he is a pugilist,
> And whether it be wrong or right
> His duty is to stand and fight.
> Not in the court, but with his fist,
> Is where the plaintiff should resist,
> And not let some poor slaughtered sheep
> Knock plaintiff out and make him weep.
> Defendant also here will state,
> If plaintiff got a wounded pate,
> It was by his own want of care,
> For by us he was treated fair.
> Therefore defendant should go hence
> With costs, for this is its defence."